

## Czech Joy in the Spotlight 2021

The 6th edition of Czech Joy in the Spotlight, organized by the Czech Film Fund / Czech Film Center, Ji.hlava IDFF and in partnership with Czech Centres, will be held in Jihlava on Wednesday October 27, 2021 at 5:00 pm at Industry Hub. The presentation and short previews of 10 brand-new Czech documentary films will be accessible for industry pass holders only.

### Blood Kin

**Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany 2021 / 80 min**

**director:** Miroslav Bambušek

**producer:** Saša Dlouhý / freeSaM (CZ)

**co-producers:** Jana Cisar Filmproduktion (DE), atelier.doc (DE), Czech Television (CZ)

Sudetenland. Present. The grandson of a murdered factory owner is hired as a mystical guide to a wealthy old man's fate. The curtly sketched wandering journey through a desolate landscape to the past reveals the roots of human brutality. Motives of personal morality, historical guilt for collaborating with the Nazis and redemption through revenge are unleashed in a phantasmagoric hallucinatory feria, a cruel dance of dehumanized figures driven to fulfillment by revenge, greed, and a faint vision of redemption. The historical allegory of People of Blood, based on a real event, balances between documentary verisimilitude and expressive, surreal dramatization.

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### Eyewitness

**Czech Republic 2021 / 93 min**

**director:** Jiří Havelka

**producer:** Národní divadlo (CZ)

A documentary anatomy of mass murder for one monitor and 34 talking heads." These are the words the filmmakers use in the credits to describe their project, which thematises the execution of more than 260 Carpathian Germans, Hungarians and Slovaks by Czechoslovak army soldiers near Přerov in June 1945. The "massacre at Přerov" is made present through a minimalist dramatisation of the interrogation footage of direct participants, eyewitnesses, and others. It is as if the characters of ancient theatre were entering the Zoom "stage" and delivering a tragic message of fear, hatred and disinterest across the chasm of time.

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## Healing Me

**Czech Republic 2021 / 75 min**

**director:** Tereza Tara

**producer:** Tereza Tara (CZ)

**co-producer:** GNOMON Production (CZ)

Director Tereza Tara fell ill at the age of twenty-five. She captured her ten-year-long journey to recovery, which took her deep into the past and to the edge of the abyss, in the form of a personal and poetic video diary. With her weakened kidneys, she visited doctors, psychosomatic experts, and an alternative healer who urged her to surrender herself into the hands of God. Gradually, she began to see the condition of her dual organs as a reflection of her unbalanced relationship with her mother, her partner, and her own body. She finally understood that if she wanted to find a cure for her diseased kidneys and start living a better life, she needed to understand herself better first.

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## Heaven

**Czech Republic 2021 / 72 min**

**director:** Tomáš Etzler, Adéla Špaljová

**producer:** Jan Macola / Mimesis Film (CZ)

Tomáš Etzler worked for seven years as a foreign correspondent in China. He came to know a country that was developing at an admirably fast pace, was swayed by its energy, and for a moment believed that modernity could bring about political change as well. Before long, it dawned on him that many people would continue to be severely punished, and the regime would still keep most of the nation in a state of indecision and ignorance. Without neglecting that face of China today, Etzler chose to tell a story of hope in his personal documentary. Using the example of an orphanage for disabled children, he shows that the answer to collectivist brutality and ruthlessness can be mutual assistance, tolerance and empathy.

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MIMESIS FILM - Jan Macola

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## How I Became a Partisan

**Czech Republic, Slovakia 2021 / 90 min**

**director:** Vera Lacková

**producer:** Jan Bodnár, Vera Lacková / Media Voice (CZ)

**co-producer:** Film & Sociologie (CZ), Czech Television (CZ) Radio and Television Slovakia (SK)

A Roma partisan. An association that has been pushed to the outer edge of historical memory provides the starting coordinates for the director's mission of emancipation. A web of themes and motifs emerges from a journey back through memories of her great-grandfather Ján Lacko. The revived stories of Roma partisans from the Slovak resistance movement are extricated and woven into a discourse on Roma identity, the roots of European racism, and disappearing traces of cultural and collective memory. Vera Lacková's partisan battle remedies the collective consciousness in her

native village as well as at the celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising. Empathetic moments in this “film resistance movement against oblivion” alternate with unexpected moments of ethnic humor and moral tragedy.

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**Leaving Beginnings Behind**

**Czech Republic, Slovakia 2021 / 75 min**

**director:** Linda Kallistová Jablonská

**producer:** Jana Brožková, Zdeněk Holý, Dušan Mulíček / Vernes (CZ)

In her most recent film, Linda Kallistová Jablonská observes three girls growing up in a residential facility in Počátky, Czech Republic, over the course of ten years. She explores their dreams about liberty, the reality they must face as well as their ideas about their own future families. The sequel to her first longitudinal documentary about Adéla, Denisa and Pavla captures the rocky road to independence after leaving the facility, their reconciliation with the past, job search, new relationships, small joys and big disappointments. Not only does the director draw an empathic portrait of three young girls with no-one to rely on but themselves; she also explores the ways in which public institutions form young people's attitudes to life.

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**Ordeal**

**Slovakia, Czech Republic 2021 / 88 min**

**director:** Zuzana Piussi

**producer:** Vít Janeček / VIRUSfilm (SK), D1film (CZ)

**co-producer:** Radio and Television Slovakia (SK)

In the past ten years, the Slovak citizens' trust in justice has fallen sharply. Thanks to the access to Threema messages of Marian Kočner, a businessman under investigation in relation to the murder of the journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová, a vast corruption network within state administration and the justice system has been revealed. Disintegrating the merciless machinery including corrupt judges, rich and influential businessmen, mafia, politicians, and innocent citizens alike, is all but an easy task. Reflecting on the long-term crisis of the Slovak justice system, Zuzana Piussi's investigative documentary asks whether the justice system with its many failures can ever be corrected.

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## **Out in Force**

**Czech Republic 2021 / 95 min**

**director:** Martin Mareček

**producer:** Jana Brožková, Zdeněk Holý / Vernes (CZ)

The desire to achieve the greatest physical strength and moments of complete lack of mental strength define the life of film critic Kamil Fila during the filming of this atypical time-lapse documentary. The necessary moment of observation is broken in a longer period of time by the protagonist's attempts to bring his life into harmony with the people closest to him, which, nevertheless, regularly lead to failure. The result is a portrait of an intellectual at his wits' end, a man who struggles with the limits of rationalisation. It is precisely the openness with which Fila lets us peer into the depths of his private life that has a therapeutic effect not only for him but also for the viewer.

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## **Points for the President aka Attempt at Contrarevolution**

**Czech Republic 2021 / 105 min**

**director:** Martin Mareček

**producer:** Jakub Wagner / GPO Platform (CZ)

In his provocative mosaic of opinions from different sides of the political spectrum, Martin Kohout reflects on where the ideals of November 1989 and the former sense of community have disappeared to. He tries to understand the progressive fragmentation of Czech society through two recent events. Both the parliamentary elections in 2017 and the subsequent direct election of the president made it clear that there is no consensus in the country today on even the most basic concepts such as "freedom" or "democracy". Sources of concern, ideas about the country's future direction, and the national myths on which cultural and political figures and disaffected voters rely all vary.

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## **Preparations for Film T**

**Czech Republic 2021 / 70 min**

**director:** Milan Klepíkov

**producer:** Martin Vandas, Antonie Dědečková / MAUR film (CZ)

In his film at the intersection of an experiment and a poetic documentary, Milan Klepíkov looks at the end of the world as defined by the poet Petr Král, who is convinced that children are born into a world which has in fact already ended. Trying to understand the young generation's viewpoint and to capture the end of cinema as we know it, Klepíkov wildly chases and captures visual and auditive input, which he combines into a film sketchbook consisting of fragments of the lives of young people who apparently have been through the end of the world, but who still have many years ahead of them.

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